

AUDUBON MAGAZINE

The Season

Formerly BIRD-LORE



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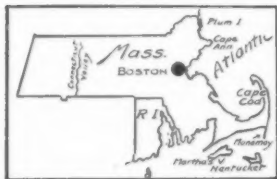


The Season

CXXXVI. October 15, 1940
to February 1, 1941



Boston Region.—Barring a real cold wave October 20-22, which brought a marked 'wave' of migration, the month



continued pleasant and very dry, with relatively poor birding. November also provided uneventful

weather, until winter arrived suddenly with deep and heavy snow the last week. The generalizations below will give a fairer picture of the last third of the fall migration.

Notable numbers of both Loons and the Gannet; at least 6 Pacific Loons reported. The flight of fresh-water and pond Ducks was poor, but probably was due in part to the prolonged hunting season, as normal numbers occurred on ponds strictly sanctuary. Eiders were markedly early and in normal numbers off Monomoy. The great concentration of sea-fowl there was otherwise sadly lacking. Old-squaws were only 10% of normal numbers, and the White-winged Scoter flight never materialized in this state at all, only 1%-3% of the usual numbers in past years being reported. The Brant showed a slight increase (Benchley).

The late Hawk flight was very poor, the Red-tail and Rough-leg particularly scarce; a few stray Goshawks in western Massachusetts only.

The excellent shore-bird flight lingered well into November, with an outstanding record for the Northern Phalarope off Monomoy, December 15, flying by a few minutes before a Puffin (Emerson, Griscom).

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Among the land birds, generally scarce, the following features deserve mention: numerous 'late dates' due to weather conditions; Creeper, a remarkable flight in late November and early December, effectually removing all fear of losses last winter; Golden-crowned Kinglet, good flight; Red-breasted Nuthatch, practically none until it arrived in numbers with the Creeper; Fox Sparrow, poor flight; Lapland Longspur, remarkable numbers on the coast everywhere.

To conclude a discussion of last winter's losses, the Snipe, Phoebe and Tree Swallow are still 'way down'; the Killdeer, Woodcock, Winter Wren, Hermit Thrush, and Blue-headed Vireo are below par, but showed breeding-season gains over the spring migration.

Outstanding records of interest: European Widgeon, 43, November 11, on Martha's Vineyard (Cottrells, Parkers); Arkansas Kingbird, 6 October records, no less than 6 different birds on the outer Cape on November 11 (!); a Gnatcatcher at Hingham, October 19 (Gleason). The old adult European Black-headed Gull with the salmon-pink under-parts was present in Newburyport harbor from October 27-January 7; in November it was joined by an immature in first fall plumage and another adult *without* any pink tinge below; it is possible that this second adult is the first-year immature seen two years ago, and it is conceivable that there is now a breeding pair in the New World.

Turning now to the winter, December was mild and open after the first week. January was a cold month, averaging 2°— per day, with far more snow than usual. Birds were

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scarce, and birding was poor in December, but improved steadily through January.

The outstanding event of the winter has been the flight of northern Finches, encouraged in part by a bumper crop of hemlock cones. Pine Siskins arrived in great numbers in December. The first flight of White-winged Crossbills in eight years reached Massachusetts a little later, in flocks up to 40, and has reached the base of Cape Cod. A very few Red Crossbills are reported (eastern Massachusetts only), but the subspecies has not been determined. Pine Grosbeaks are plentiful north of Massachusetts, well scattered in small numbers in western Massachusetts, but hardly any eastward. Evening Grosbeaks are present, but scarcer as yet than Pines. There are a few Redpolls, chiefly westward. Goldfinches were remarkably abundant in December.

For the first time in many years Cedar Waxwings appeared in December and flooded the state in large flocks throughout January. Brünnich's Murre showed up in mid-January in numbers and has been present ever since; there have been a few Dovekies, but scarcely any Auks. Starlings are pleasingly scarce, Robins are numerous, and there have been an exceptional number of winter stragglers among the *Icterida*. Outstanding freak records at feeding stations are an Ovenbird at Montague (to January 30) and a Grasshopper Sparrow at Andover through December to January 19 (Oscar Root). The adult male Oregon Junco, which spent last winter at Danvers, is back at the same feeding station this winter; with him is a ratty-looking immature female, suggesting possible miscegenation in northern New England.—LUDLOW GRISCOM, *Museum of Comparative Zoology, Cambridge, Mass.*

New York Region.—The pleasant weather of early October ended at the beginning of the present period with a cold spell bringing the first killing frost in New York City on October 19 and sub-freezing



temperatures in the New Jersey hills. The result was a great exodus from the region, with Ducks, shore birds, and land birds moving rapidly. The Snow Bunting arrived simultaneously at the extremities of the area on October 20, Sussex Co., N. J. (Edwards) and Montauk (Raynor). Great flights of Hermit Thrushes, Kinglets, Winter Wrens, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Creepers, and various Sparrows were reported. What part of our fall avifauna remained experienced a normal November followed by a cold snap during the first week of December. Temperature in New York went to 11° and in Sussex County below zero, freezing all ponds and lakes while the first real snowstorm covered the countryside. The remainder of the month was warmer than normal, and the new year began with an average January.

A good flight of Red-throated Loons, Jones Beach, November 9 (Sedwitz), and many wintering on the north Jersey coast, but Common Loon below normal. Notable was a Pacific Loon, Rye, N. Y., December 22–January 5 (R. T. Peterson, *et al.*). Pied-billed Grebe wintering, Como, N. J. (Seeley, Cant), and 1, Rockville Center, January 19.

Most extraordinary of late Heron records was a Louisiana Heron, Orient, December 1 (Latham), the only report for the year. Others were Little Blue Heron, 2, Bridgehampton, October 27 (Pettit), an immature Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Bayside, November 3 (D. and W. Reid, Campbell), and Green Heron, Idlewild, November 22.

Waterfowlers reported the best season in many years, and a census taken at the end of the season (December 11–15) on Long Island showed a slight increase, the total of 154,914 comparing with 148,081 for the same area in 1939. Greater Scaup fairly stable, still providing 40% of total. Black Ducks seemed decreased, White-winged Scoters abundant and increased. Good increase in Golden-eye and Old-squaw. Other species up were American Merganser, Pintail, Shoveller, Ring-neck, and Redhead. Brant slightly increased. Maximum for Ring-neck, 243, and Gadwall, 55, South Haven, December 13–14 (Raynor, Wilcox). Other waterfowl items include Whistling Swan, 16, flying over Budd Lake, N. J., November 16 (Rusling); Blue Goose, Brookhaven, October 20–November 10 (Breslau, Sedwitz, Raynor);

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Snow Goose, 100, over Brooklyn, November 5 (Nathan), and 1, Jones Beach, December 1, through period (var. obs.); King Eider, good flight, Long Island, maximum 8, Montauk, December 8 (Breslau, Sedwitz), Jersey coast at Como, 1 arrived December 1 (Edwards, Eynon), number built up to maximum of 13 during January (var. obs.). One American Eider, Atlantic Beach, November 10–December 29 (Rose, *et al.*).

Last heavy Hawk flight, mainly Red-tails on Jersey ridges, October 27, with 5 Goshawks that day on Kittatinny (Rusling). Good year for Goshawks away from ridges, many reports. Bald Eagle widely distributed on Long Island, but Rough-legs spotty.

Many shore birds lingered into December, but most were gone by the end of October. Great activity October 25, with large numbers of Red-backs, Sanderling, Black-bellied Plover and Pectorals. A big exodus November 5–10 concluded an excellent shore-bird year. Golden Plover numbers low. Purple Sandpipers from November 9, maximum oddly enough at Rye, December 1, 100 birds (Eisenman, Oboiko). Hudsonian Godwit, New Inlet, October 18–29 (J. T. Nichols, Wilcox, Rose, Terry). Late Hudsonian Curlew, October 26–November 10, at Idlewild (Mayer).

Few white-winged Gulls on Long Island, numerous in Jersey. Bonaparte's Gull exceptionally common. A Laughing Gull at Montauk, January 5 (Arbib, *et al.*). Kittiwake, 20, Wreck Pond, N. J., December 14, (Seeley), a few on Long Island. Forster's Tern, best season ever.

Flight of Dovekies and Razor-billed Auks, Montauk, December 25–27 (McKeever, Sabin); 1 Razor-bill, Shark River, N. J., during January (Rogers); Brünnich's Murre, Long Beach, December 15 (Mayer).

Snowy Owl, Maplewood, N. J., November 11 (Rusling), only 2 later.

Unusual late flight of Flycatchers: Crested to December 22, Jones Beach (P. Murphy, Sr.); Kingbird, Orient, November 24, (Latham); *Empidonax* (sp. ?), New Rochelle, December 21 (Bull, Friedle); Arkansas Kingbird, several well into November.

Four reports for Northern Shrike. Outstanding items of interest: Baltimore Oriole, December 7–February 1, at Watchung, N. J. (Hughes); Tree Swallow, small flocks win-

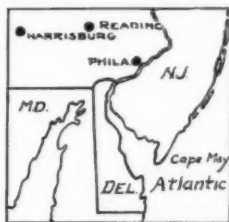
tering at Oradell, N. J., first state record inland (Brown, Westcott) and Jones Beach (Elliott, *et al.*); many Ruby-crowned Kinglets until year's end. January reports from Long Island show wintering Virginia Rail, Long-billed Marsh Wren, Carolina Wren, Thrasher, Catbird, Western Palm Warbler, Towhee, both salt-marsh Sparrows in numbers, etc.

At least one report for every species of northern Finch in the region as a whole, but no numbers save for abundant Siskins to the end of period. Most notable were Evening Grosbeak, Dead River, N. J., January 19 (Rusling); Red Crossbill, 4, Bronx Park, February 1 (Bull, Poor); and Redpoll, 25, Orient, January 28 (Latham).

The F. J. Austins identified unquestionably a Swallow-tailed Flycatcher, Gilgo Beach, November 22—first state record! —ROBERT ARBIB, JR., *Woodmere*, N. Y. and ALFRED E. EYNON, 107 *Halsey Street*, Newark, N. J.

[During the course of the next year while Mr. Arbib is enlisted in the Army, Mr. Eynon will undertake full responsibility for the New York Region. All field observations intended for publication should be sent direct to him at the above address.—ED.]

Philadelphia Region.—Normal weather conditions prevailed throughout the period from October 15 to February 1. No heavy



snowfall or severe cold weather occurred.

Northern Finches have been represented by Siskins and Red Crossbills. The former have been abundant locally.

Nearly all records of both species have come from the Upper Wissahickon, Philadelphia, where the birds have been feeding on the seeds extracted from the hemlock cones. Small numbers of these birds occurred in late December and had become definitely more numerous by late January.

Along the seacoast, Snow Buntings have been present in normal numbers. Among these, now and then, a few Longspurs have been noted.

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Brant in Absecon and Lake Bays, Atlantic County, N. J., have shown a decided increase this winter, due no doubt to continued restrictions on shooting. On these two areas, 25,000 to 30,000 Brant were estimated to be present November 11.

Large numbers of Ducks have wintered on the Delaware River above and below central Philadelphia. Various observers estimated the numbers from 15,000 to 25,000. Black Ducks and Pintails have been the most numerous. Scaups, American Mergansers, Mallards, Ruddy Ducks and Ring-necked Ducks have been recorded in small numbers.

This year appeared to be the peak of Ruffed Grouse abundance in southern New Jersey. More than the usual numbers have been reported, the nearest to Philadelphia being at Berlin, N. J., January 4.

Again this winter, many dead sea birds have been washed ashore at Island Beach, N. J.—Gulls most numerous, Razor-billed Auks, Dovekies, Loons, Scoters, Grebes, and 1 Gannet very much alive but oil-spotted.

Other records of interest: Fort Mott, N. J., November 11, Arkansas Kingbird, 1 (J. T. McNeill, Jr.). Marshalltown, N. J., October 26, Migrant Shrike, 1. Elsenboro, N. J., October 27, Golden Plover, 1. Fort Mott, N. J., October 27, Green-winged Teal, 500 (Brown, *et al.*). Fort Mott, N. J., November 15, Gadwall, 1 (Edwards). Fort Mott, N. J., November 24, King Rail, 1 (Jacobs). Fort Mott, N. J., November 17, Red-wing, 300,000 (estimated) going to roost (Potter). Brigantine, N. J., November 11, Short-eared Owl, 10 (Anderson and Regensburg). Long Beach, N. J., November 10, Black-backed Gull, 100 (Haines and Ward). Brigantine, N. J., November 2, Clay-colored Sparrow, 1 (Yoder).

At Hawk Mountain, Pa., November 3, Pine Siskin (large flight). Long Beach, N. J., November 17, Glaucous Gull, 1 (E. and Q. Kramer). Ventnor City, N. J., January 5, Razor-billed Auk, 1 immature (Atkinson). Bordentown, N. J., January 1, Red-headed Woodpecker, 2 (Haines). Sea Isle City, N. J., December 17, Dovekie flew against policeman's car during early morning hours (reported by Batezel). Beverly, N. J., February 1, Goshawk, 1 (Street).—
JULIAN K. POTTER, 437 Park Ave., Collingswood, N. J.

Carolina Region.—The report for this region includes the southeastern corner of Virginia. Weather about normal during



the period with little in the way of extra warm or cold spells, little rain and little or no snow,

none at all in the eastern portion.

Inland Section. Last departure dates for southbound migrants: Redstart, Statesville, October 16 (Grace Anderson); Parula and Kentucky Warblers, Henderson, October 17 (Hunter); Wood Pewee, Henderson, and Chipping Sparrow, Statesville, October 18; Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-throat, and Black and White Warbler, Statesville, October 19. The first Hermit Thrush, Statesville, October 8; first Golden-crowned Kinglet, Chapel Hill, October 17 (Odum); first Ruby-crown, October 19; Myrtle Warbler on the 22d, and Junco on the 29th. An unusually late Magnolia Warbler on the 30th at Henderson. At Winston-Salem (W. Anderson), the first Myrtle Warbler was noted October 19, a late Thrasher on October 20, and a Blue-headed Vireo on November 1, while during the winter from 500 to 1000 Canada Geese remained on near-by ponds. Black Ducks and Mallards were common, while a Canvas-back and 2 Hooded Mergansers were noted on December 28. At Chapel Hill, a Blue-headed Vireo was reported on December 8, Yellow-throats twice in the month, and a Red-breasted Nuthatch on the 28th.

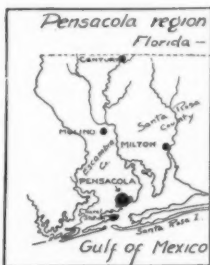
There was a flock of 30 Pine Siskins at Statesville on December 21, the only record this winter in the whole region. Horned Larks were noted at Red Springs (Murray) and Rocky Mount (Craighill) in December and at Raleigh in January, Catbirds at Lake Mattamuskeet (Johnson) in December, and Rusty Blackbirds at Washington (Biggs). Chipping Sparrows turned up at Arden, in Buncombe County, December 26 (Mrs. Grinnell), a Black and White Warbler the same day, and Tree Sparrows on December 9. At Columbia, S. C. (Mrs.

Charles), fewer Robins, Myrtle Warblers and Bluebirds were noted, but more Waxwings and the usual number of wintering Canada Geese.

Coastal Section. Swans, Canada Geese, Snow Geese, and Brant were present in about normal numbers in North Carolina waters but only 50 Canada Geese, with a few Blues, were reported from South Carolina. The main flock of Snow Geese left Pea Island (Walker) on January 31, but Canada Geese were still plentiful. Ducks were apparently somewhat scarcer in the Charleston region but were in normal numbers in North Carolina waters, some increases being reported from Pea Island for the Buffle-head, Green-winged Teal, and Shoveller. White-winged Scoters were first noted at Pea Island on November 8, while American Scoters appeared near Charleston on October 26, this being three weeks ahead of any dates in previous years. Up to 20 Gannets were noted at Pea Island on November 6, all being immature birds.

A Razor-billed Auk was reported from Pea Island on January 8, and a Dovekie on January 31. An unusual record was that of an Avocet at Pea Island on December 27, and a Saw-whet Owl was picked up dead on December 6. Black Skimmers to the number of 2000 were noted off Pea Island on November 13, the first Barn Owls on November 15, while a Hawk that was thought to be a Rough-leg was seen on December 27, and on November 27 there was an unusually late Blue-gray Gnatcatcher at Back Bay. Two nesting records come within the period, both at Back Bay, Va.—on January 10 a nest of the Great Horned Owl was found, which blew down a few days later and proved to contain two eggs; Bald Eagles were found nesting on January 17, and a day or two later the old bird was steadily sitting. Bluebirds were scarce at Back Bay, Horned Larks were noted at Pea Island on January 30, and Short-billed Marsh Wrens at Pea Island on November 4 and at Back Bay on December 12.—C. S. BRIMLEY, 515 Washington St., and JOHN H. GREY, JR., 2718 Vanderbilt Ave., Raleigh, N. C.

Pensacola (Fla.) Region.—The earliest severe freeze ever recorded locally struck on November 15, with an all-time low (for that



date) of 25° on November 16. The remainder of the present double period was warmer than usual with no further freezing weather. The drought of the preceding period persisted until late in November, when a

long rainy spell that extended into early January maintained high water levels throughout the region. An interesting sidelight on our upside-down winter was the blooming of Indian pipes in December.

Small-bird life this winter is at the lowest ebb I have ever known, and local observations seem to be borne out by reports and rumors from other parts of the South. Unless reports in this season from northern stations comment on large numbers of birds of some species that are staying farther north than usual in this warm winter, my inclination is to connect the local scarcity with the devastating effect of the severe freeze of January, 1940. At that time I reported an almost complete disappearance of several species, and it is some of those same species that are rarest this winter. Of our regular common winter residents, a few are as common (or nearly so) as usual: Myrtle Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Vesper, Chipping, Field, and White-throated Sparrows. But many others, usually common, are rare or absent: Savannah Sparrow, usually our most abundant Sparrow, appears seldom and in small groups; Phoebe, rare; Palm and Yellow Palm Warblers, usually almost as abundant as the Myrtle, were present only as occasional stragglers until January, when a fair number appeared; Bluebird, rare as a breeding bird last summer, continued to be rare even after arrivals from farther north were due, and only since mid-January has it been seen regularly; Robin, present in widely separated large flocks in the river swamps, but with no surplus to overflow into the city where it is usually present in thousands; Hermit Thrush, usually common, is so rare that I have seen only 2 or 3 up to the close of the period; Killdeer, rare in all its usual haunts. Local scarcity of the Mourning

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Dove may be correlated with its reported extreme and unprecedented abundance in parts of southern Florida.

With Ducks, the situation is encouraging. This is not a great wildfowl region, but even here Ducks are more numerous this winter than for many years past. No direct comparison can be made locally with the abundance of Ducks of say 20 years ago, for the intensified aviation training of the past few years has maintained hundreds of airplanes in flight over this whole region throughout daylight hours—and Ducks seem particularly susceptible to that kind of disturbance.

Fall migration was irregular, with many species arriving much later than usual. However, at least two appeared earlier than ever before recorded: Cedar Waxwing on October 20, and Purple Finch on November 14 (both reported by Mrs. A. L. Whigham). One of the few known local occurrences of the Whistling Swan was of a single bird in immature plumage brought in on November 16 by a hunter who had mistaken it for a Goose. The hunter reported later that he had seen two more Swans in the same marsh as the first on November 17.

Of departing migrants, several stayed later than ever before recorded: Rose-breasted Grosbeak, last seen on October 20 (A. F. Wicke, Sr.); Knot (very rare), October 27; and Ruby-throated Hummingbird, seen daily up to November 15 (Mrs. Whigham). Mrs. Whigham also contributed several late (though not latest) departure dates, as follows: Northern Water-Thrush, October 18; Red-eyed Vireo, October 25; and Indigo Bunting, November 1. Other departure dates, about normal, include: Chimney Swift, October 16; Magnolia Warbler, October 20; and Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Wood Pewee, Barn Swallow, and Black-throated Green Warbler, October 27.

Of 2 Bald Eagle nests under observation, one probably contained eggs (to judge from the actions of the birds) on November 10; and on the other an Eagle was seen incubating (or perhaps brooding closely) on December 22. At the Great Blue Heron rookery discovered last spring, the birds were gathering in some numbers at the end of the period, though no nesting activity was noted.—FRANCIS M. WESTON, 2006 E. Jordan St., Pensacola, Fla.

Ohio Region.—On the whole, the weather during the late fall and early winter season was warm and somewhat dry. Notable exceptions to the prevailing mildness occurred in the violent windstorm of November 11, and in the unseasonably cold weather of late November and early December, which



brought the first noteworthy snowfall.

Due to limitations of space it is possible to mention only the outstanding records and features of the period. In general, dates of arrival and departure seem to have been about normal, but some Ducks, Geese, and shore birds were rather later than usual. From October 19 to 22 there occurred a well-marked flight of Geese, predominantly Blue Geese, with a few Snows and Canadas. The available records indicate that the flight followed the usual pattern for *Chen* flights in Ohio, in that it was largely restricted to the central and western parts of the state, and was of short duration. During these four days, records are at hand from Put-in-Bay, Toledo (Anderson, Campbell), Columbus (Hicks), Canal Winchester (Wolfram), Circleville (Chapman), Derby (Clausgus), Washington Court House (Jenkins, Hicks), and Dayton (Blincoe). The largest flights were noted October 21: 2000 at Toledo, 3000 at Washington, and from 2000–4000 at Dayton. Since very few of these birds tarry on their southward migration except in the neighborhood of the larger lakes in western Ohio, it may be noted that a flock of 7 was present October 22–November 10 at the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir in Delaware County (Thomas, Clausgus).

Late October also witnessed an influx of shore birds, and some species lingered much later than usual. During the last week of the month Black-bellied Plover were seen at six widely separated localities, with late records from Lake Milton on October 31 (Skaggs), and the O'Shaughnessy Reservoir on November 10 (Thomas). The Ruddy Turnstone was still present at Cleveland October 19 (Morse) and at O'Shaughnessy

October 27. Pectoral, Least, and Semipalmated Sandpipers were recorded at the latter locality on November 9 (Clausen), and a Greater Yellow-legs at Put-in-Bay on December 8, and a White-rumped Sandpiper at Pymatuning, October 27 (Skaggs).

Perhaps the most notable northern visitors were the Crossbills; both species were seen in small numbers. A flock of 12 Red Crossbills was reported from near Toledo as early as November 7 (Anderson), with a number of subsequent records in the same locality. This species was also recorded near Cleveland in early December (Boles, Skaggs), and at Youngstown on the Christmas census. Seven White-winged Crossbills were seen at Toledo on November 25 (Anderson, Campbell), and a single bird was taken at Put-in-Bay on December 1. A Snowy Owl was seen at Fairport on December 15 (Skaggs, Simpson). Saw-whet Owls have been reported from Columbus (November 18, Thomas) and Dayton (December 1, Blincoe).

Other interesting records in the period preceding the Christmas census include: a Golden Eagle taken near Yellow Springs on November 30 (Hicks); Franklin's Gull near Cleveland on October 20 (Eckelberry) and October 27 (Skaggs); Parasitic Jaeger at Maumee Bay on October 21 (Anderson, Campbell); 2 White-winged Scoters seen at Sharon Lake near Cincinnati on December 1 (Acomb and Kain); Palm Warbler at Toledo on December 3 (Anderson, Campbell).

The 18 Christmas census lists from Ohio published in the last issue of AUDUBON MAGAZINE seem to give a fairly representative picture of the winter bird life. A composite list includes 140 species of birds for the region. One notes that the Ducks, shore birds, and divers are well represented. Considering the generally mild weather, it is rather surprising that the Thrush and Blackbird families contributed so few species and individuals. Records made subsequent to the census add 8 species to the list of wintering birds: Pied-billed Grebe, Akron, January 26 (A. Smith, Rennecker); Gadwall, lower Muskingum River (Hicks); Oldsquaw, Conneaut (Hicks) and Toledo (Campbell); Black Vulture near Rockbridge, January 12 (Thomas); Migrant Shrike, near Kirkpatrick, January 17 (Walker); Short-billed Marsh Wren, near Dayton, December 28 (Burr);

Fox Sparrow, near Dayton, December 28 (Burr); and White-winged Crossbill, Toledo, January 5 (Brandenburg, Campbell). The Ruby-crowned Kinglet, which was recorded on a census at Salem, has since been reported in two additional localities, near Dayton on December 28 (Burr), and at Toledo on January 1 (Anderson, Campbell). The annual winter inventory of waterfowl made by Dr. Hicks and his associates at the Ohio Wildlife Research Station indicates a January population of more than 24,000 Ducks, exclusive of those in the western end of Lake Erie and in the Maumee River. Of these about 14,000 were Black Ducks, with American Merganser, Mallard, and Lesser Scaup following in order of abundance among the commoner species.—C. F. WALKER, Stone Laboratory, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.

Chicago Region.—In the absence of a 'Season' report from the Chicago Region for September and October, the more unusual



records of that period are interpolated in the present report.

Autumn was almost uniformly equable in temperature, with no extreme variations from the established average. October was warmer than normal by a total of 105°, but this was largely offset in November by temperatures which totaled 46° below normal for the month. December and January were both exceptionally mild. A cold snap during the first week of November (min. temp. -5° on November 3) and others less severe on January 3-6 and January 18-20 approximated winter conditions not at all borne out at other times.

Precipitation during the autumn and early winter months exceeded that of 1939 and resulted in a general distribution of migrant water birds. Marshes and lagoons that last year were impoverished by extended drought have maintained an adequate water level.

The combination of equable temperature and moderate rainfall resulted in an even flow of migrants, generally distributed

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within ecological bounds. First arrivals of many species were early but the average development of migration was somewhat delayed. The absence of distinct flight waves this year gave an impression of relative scarcity which is unjustified. Perhaps the most direct and noticeable effect of the mild weather has been the delayed departure of many migrants and the increased percentage of wintering species.

The waterfowl migration developed slowly and steadily, but continuous mild weather discouraged the spectacular inrush of birds noted in other years. Hunting reports in Illinois indicate an increase of at least 15% in the Duck population. Black Ducks, considered only moderately abundant migrants in the Chicago Region, were almost as numerous as Mallards in early September, but were outnumbered approximately 3 to 1 thereafter. Most of the river Ducks, including Baldpate, were abundant at McGinnis Slough by the end of September and increased steadily until the middle of November. The dominant species were Mallard, Baldpate, Pintail, Blue-winged Teal, Black Duck and Wood Duck in the order named. Shovellers were first noted October 1 (Dreuth, Nork) and were reported in small numbers until December 6 (Levy). The migration of river Ducks passed its peak before the end of November, but small flocks of Mallards and Black Ducks were reported at McGinnis Slough as late as January 3 (Johnston).

Seven Ruddy Ducks, reported at McGinnis Slough on October 21 by Johnston, were the first diving Ducks to appear in this area. Ruddies are locally uncommon but this year small flocks were reported regularly until the middle of November. They were last seen at McGinnis Slough, November 21 (Nork, Clark). Other first arrivals were: Lesser Scaup, Barrington, October 21 (Weigel); Canvas-back and Old-squaw, McGinnis Slough, October 23 (Dreuth, Nork); Ring-necked Duck, McGinnis Slough, October 27 (Johnston); American Golden-eye, Lincoln Park, November 6 (Dreuth); Red-breasted Merganser, Lincoln Park, November 8 (Dreuth); Buffle-head, Jackson Park, November 12 (Crymes); Redhead and Hooded Merganser, McGinnis Slough, November 14 (Decker, Baldwin); American Merganser, Lincoln Park, November 16

(Nork); White-winged Scoter, Lincoln Park, November 25 (Dreuth). Most diving Ducks were well represented by the middle of November.

The general migration of shore birds extended from July 21 (Waukegan Flats—Johnston) until September 14 (McGinnis Slough—Clark, Nork, Dreuth) but declined rapidly thereafter. Among the rare migrants reported were: Ruddy Turnstones seen intermittently at Montrose Beach from August 31 to September 25 (Dreuth); Baird's Sandpiper reported several times and last seen at Montrose Beach, September 12 (Dreuth); Long-billed Dowitcher observed occasionally at Wolf Lake (Levy) and McGinnis Slough, September 8 (C. O. S. field trip); Stilt Sandpiper (several records for Wolf Lake, Willow Springs and McGinnis Slough, July 26—September 8); and Buff-breasted Sandpiper at Montrose Beach, October 2–5 (Dreuth). Late departures include: Killdeer and Wilson's Snipe, November 27 (Levy); Black-bellied Plover, November 2 (Weigel); Greater Yellow-legs, November 5 (Dreuth); Red-backed Sandpiper, November 4 (Dreuth); Wilson's Phalarope, October 5 (Blake); Sanderling, October 9 (Dreuth).

Many migrant Passeres have this year lingered in the Chicago area long beyond their normal time of departure. Interesting last records include: Phoebe, October 17 (Dreuth); Wood Pewee, October 3 (Smith); Purple Martin, September 18 (Dreuth); House Wren, October 14 (Dreuth); Thrasher, December 26—January 12 (Fisher); Robin, wintering in unusual numbers; Hermit Thrush, October 24 (Dreuth); Gray-cheeked Thrush, October 9 (Crymes); Cedar Waxwing, November 14 (Weigel); Yellow-throated Vireo, October 6 (Smith); Orange-crowned Warbler, October 20 (Dreuth); Magnolia Warbler, October 6 (Dreuth); Myrtle and Palm Warblers, November 14 (Weigel); Northern Yellow-throat, October 6 (Dreuth); Red-wing, November 17 (C. O. S. field trip); Baltimore Oriole, September 24 (Walton); Rusty Blackbird, November 21 (Nork, Clark); Bronzed Grackle, November 15 (Levy); Scarlet Tanager, October 3 (Levy); Indigo Bunting, October 24 (Dreuth); Savannah Sparrow, November 4 (Dreuth); Field Sparrow, November 5 (Dreuth); White-throated Sparrow, November 3 (Holabird);

Swamp Sparrow, November 21 (Nork, Clark).—EMMETT R. BLAKE, *Field Museum, Chicago, Ill.*

Missouri Region.—The unusually mild weather of October and early November ended in a severe cold wave November 11,



with a temperature drop to 8°. From that date until January 1, temperatures averaged slightly below normal with about normal precipitation.

Frozen rain covered the ground and vegetation from December 15 to 18. January temperatures averaged 4° above normal. At the close of the month, precipitation (mostly rain) was 3.75 inches in excess. Rivers and lakes were open most of the time.

Migrant and wintering Sparrows such as the Song, Fox, White-crowned, White-throated, and Harris's Sparrows, appeared about a week behind schedule. Harris's Sparrow, a characteristic migrant and winter resident of western Missouri, has been present in but a small fraction of its usual numbers. No more than 3 to 6 birds have been seen on a single day when the number should be 40 or 50.

Waterfowl came in slowly during autumn migration. The first Redheads were seen on Quivera Lake, October 27. Only 85 Ducks of 9 species were observed on this date. On the corresponding date in 1939, 1200 Ducks of 12 species were on the lake. Large numbers of waterfowl were not seen until November 10, a day ahead of the cold wave. On this date about 4500 Ducks of 13 species were observed on Quivera and Tonganoxie lakes. These included about 3000 Lesser Scaup. Although formerly an abundant migrant through here, flights of the Lesser Scaup have been much reduced in recent years. Only one Duck, the Canvas-back, has been very scarce this season.

Because of mild weather more waterfowl remained during January than usual. On January 19, about 3000 Ducks of 12 species were seen on Quivera and Tonganoxie lakes, which were frozen over except for small

areas kept open by the birds. The list of wintering Ducks includes 2670 Mallards, 15 Black Ducks, 12 Gadwalls, 12 Baldpates, 9 Pintails, 2 Redheads, 8 Ring-necked Ducks, 2 Lesser Scaups, 18 American Golden-eyes, 5 Buffle-heads, 203 American Mergansers, and 4 Hooded Mergansers. Six Coots were seen with the Ducks (Hedges, Newton, Spotswood, Cunningham).

Wintering Hawks and Owls have been present in only slightly smaller numbers than during the fall migration. The Eastern Red-tail, Krider's Hawk, Harlan's Hawk, both light and dark phases of the American Rough-leg, and the Marsh Hawk, have been numerous and widely distributed. Great numbers of Short-eared Owls have invaded the whole region, and it is needless to say that many have been killed. In a campaign conducted against predators in Macon County, north-central Missouri, several hundred Hawks and Owls of 10 species were shot. A study of 240 stomachs of these birds, made at the University of Missouri, and reported by Dr. Rudolf Bennitt, showed that only 7% contained remains of birds. Only 2% of the total contained poultry or game birds. It is hoped that the results of this study will be given widespread publicity.

Seed-eaters have fared well in the vast area of small timber, vine tangles, and weed-patches in the Missouri valley near Parkville. Fox, Song, Swamp, Harris's, White-crowned, and White-throated Sparrows, and Red-eyed and Arctic Towhees, were observed there regularly during January. The White-crowned Sparrow is more common than usual. A Gambel's Sparrow was seen on January 12 (Cunningham).

Purple Finches have been reported in usual numbers from St. Louis (H. Comfort, Short, *et al.*) and Lebanon (Moore, *et al.*), but have not been seen around Kansas City. Bluebirds have been present in fair numbers, but there have been very few reports of the Robin during January. Eastern and Western Meadowlarks have been scarce. Lapland Longspurs, first reported on November 5 by Newton, have been present in normal numbers. A wintering Lincoln's Sparrow was observed on December 29 (Hedges). Red-wings, present in thousands last winter, have been scarce this year. There have been few reports of the Golden-crowned Kinglet

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and none at all for the Pine Siskin.

From Pere Marquette State Park at Grafton, Ill., Father George M. Link reports numbers of Mallards and Pintails with a few Black Ducks, Baldpates, Gadwalls, and Green-winged Teal during January. Additional January notes from the same observer include: hundreds of Gulls (probably Herring and Ring-billed); 20 Bald Eagles; a Golden Eagle caught in a trap, January 17; and a Bewick's Wren in song, January 15.—JAMES W. CUNNINGHAM, 4425 Main St., Kansas City, Mo.

Minnesota Region.—The mild weather of October, without a killing frost at Minneapolis, continued until November 11, when



came one of the most disastrous storms on record here. A drizzling rain on the morning of that date changed quickly to sleet, then by noon to snow, with a rapidly falling temperature and a terrific wind (30 to 42 m.p.h. and even 50 m.p.h. on the prairie), driving the fine snow into every crack and cranny, piling up heavy drifts, and paralyzing out-of-door activities over 80% of the state. Caught unawares, the destruction of life was appalling. Not a few Duck hunters and rural wayfarers lost their lives and the destruction of both domestic and wildlife was very great. The fierce wind forced snow particles in among the feathers of birds and the hair of mammals. These particles melted, soon froze and rendered the unfortunate creatures unable to save themselves. The great extent of destruction among birds was attested by widespread reports of their scarcity following the storm. Feeding stations were deserted or sparsely attended. Even the hardy House Sparrow suffered extensively. Dr. Luedtke of Fairmont, Martin County, reported that all Ring-necked Pheasants in exposed places perished. Dead or helpless birds varying in size from a Bluebird to a Great Blue Heron were brought to the museum for several days fol-

lowing the storm. Even up to the present date, the numbers of winter residents have been much below normal.

The following letter from J. P. Jensen, of Dassel, Meeker County, just south of the center of the state, serves to reveal clearly the effects of the storm of November 11 on bird life in general. "The Armistice Blizzard left many dead birds here as elsewhere Goldfinches, Blue Jays and English Sparrows were found dead after the storm. Hundreds of Blackbirds covered the snow in places. Only about 20% of our local Pheasant population died—truly a hardy bird. Many Ducks, chiefly Mallards and Scaups, froze in the ice of our lakes. One Holboell's Grebe, one Canada Goose, and some Ducks were rescued but most of the Ducks were dead—perhaps 90%. Thousands of wildfowl and small birds filled the sky Monday A.M. as they flew southward before the fierce storm." This is a fair sample of what occurred and it was even worse out on the prairie.

Later snowstorms in November resulted in the month being the wettest November on record and other additional storms in December brought the precipitation for 1940 nearly an inch above normal (28.52 at Minneapolis). There has been no protracted cold weather thus far but occasional temperatures far below zero have occurred for brief periods. The alternating cold and mild spells and at times rain or sleet have resulted in conditions bad for the birds—a coating of ice over everything—the slippery winter of 1940-41.

In advance of the great storm there came a great flight of Ducks from the north—described by some observers as "massive." For the most part they passed on southward, the previous mild weather having held them in the North, and then they came through with a rush.

On October 23-26, Messrs. Breckenridge and Nord, of the museum staff, visited the western part of the state to study and photograph, if possible, the migrating Cranes mentioned in the last article. With the assistance of Warden Streich, they surveyed the region east of Moorhead and estimated that at least 1000 Cranes in scattered flocks were present there. Reports of resident farmers stated that most of the birds had

passed on southward at an earlier date.

The fall flight of northern Robins was much smaller than usual, leaving an abundant crop of mountain-ash berries largely untouched.

The comparatively mild winter led a number of species of birds to remain here. Among numbers of Ducks, the Gadwall and Shoveller were exceptional, as was a Great Blue Heron at Fort Snelling in January (Harrell, Longley); Purple Finches at Duluth, January 3 (Mrs. Olin); Golden-crowned Kinglets in little groups at Minneapolis (Mr. McFadyen and others); and occasional Sparrow and Marsh Hawks. With the exception of Redpolls and Snow Buntings, winter visitant and resident birds have been notably scarce. Horned Larks appeared in the vicinity of Minneapolis on February 2.

Interesting items: 12 Ravens at Virginia, January 12, feeding from garbage cans in a city lot (Miss Barrows); 11 Arctic Three-toed Woodpeckers on one day about December 1, Glyndon, Clay County (Miss Signe Lee); a Canada Jay at Minneapolis, February 1 (Nordquist).—THOS. S. ROBERTS, *Museum of Natural History, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.*

Northern Great Plains Region.—The winter, as a whole, was reasonably mild. Rather heavy snowfalls occurred in some



areas, while in others the precipitation was quite scanty. The northeastern portion of North Dakota especially had a great deal of snow. The outstanding feature of the period was the Armistice Day storm. The fall up to this time had been exceptionally mild. A fairly heavy snowfall occurred on November 9 and 10, followed by very strong and cold winds on November 11 and 12. The temperature dropped to -24° at Lower Souris on November 13. There was a very heavy migration just following the snow, and preceding the heaviest wind and cold. This movement reached its peak on the morning of November 10 when great flocks of Ducks were in sight almost constantly,

high in the air and headed southward in direct and rapid flight. There were but few waterfowl left after this storm, although small numbers have spent at least a part of the winter in favorable localities. The suddenness and severity of the storm caused some mortality to waterfowl, but the damage was not serious. At Stump Lake a number of Whistling Swans became so coated with ice and so weakened by the fury of the gale that they could not arise from the water. Part of these birds were saved by wildlife officials. In most instances, however, the birds lost were individuals suffering from shot wounds or weakened by lead poisoning. Peterson describes an interesting situation in eastern South Dakota: "... large numbers of Ducks—Mallards, Pintails, and Ruddies, principally—weakened and froze to the ice. Some pulled loose after a struggle, leaving patches of feathers in the ice. Others were released by sportsmen worthy of the name, while others again became victims of meat hunters who gathered what they could."

A Loon was recorded on Des Lacs, November 4 (Low). Grebes were scarce and restricted to Pied-billed, a few of which were frozen in during the Armistice Day storm. An American Egret was seen on Lower Souris on November 2 and 3 (by five observers).

From the standpoint of the hunter, the season on waterfowl was a great disappointment. The mild weather greatly retarded migratory movements previous to the storm, and the fall flight in general was quite poor. The storm pushed most of the birds right on through with scarcely a stop-over. Small numbers of Ducks have been reported as wintering on a few areas, including Sand Lake (Beed) with 1000 Mallards, a few Pintails, and a very few Black Ducks; Lake Ilo (Low), 312 Mallards; and Waubay (Ambrosen), 100 Mallards, 2 Black Ducks, and 2 Pintails. Beed noted a flock of at least 2000 Buffle-heads on Sand Lake, November 10. Beed also reports 6 White-winged Scoters on November 10, while a flock of 15 of these birds was observed by Hammond near Lower Souris on November 6.

Two Turkey Vultures were observed near Bottineau on November 3 (Street); a Goshawk near Tower City, December 2 (Preston). American Rough-legged Hawks

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have been quite common this winter, with a fairly heavy wave in late October. Golden Eagles were reported by almost every observer. Although Bald Eagles are ordinarily uncommon in this region during the winter, they were recorded at Waubay, Sand Lake, Upper Souris, and Lower Souris. Marsh Hawks wintered as far north as Sand Lake. A Marsh Hawk was observed at Lower Souris, December 28. A Gyrfalcon was shot by a farmer near Wilton on December 15, and we managed to secure the bird for a specimen. A Duck Hawk on Lower Souris on November 6. Snowy Owls were quite scarce, and there were not many Short-eared Owls in the northern part of the region. Beed writes that a few Short-eared Owls were found dead on the Sand Lake Refuge following the November storm. He also reports the banding of a Saw-whet Owl on November 6.

Blue Jays appear to be entirely absent in two localities, Waubay and Lower Souris, where they are ordinarily winter residents. Crows are wintering in areas where they are usually absent. Street noted a Red-breasted Nuthatch at Bottineau on November 2 and 4. Robins have been reported by almost every observer. Both species of Kinglets were seen at Fargo in late October (Stevens), and Golden-crowned Kinglets at Minot on December 3 (Stine). Bohemian Waxwings were quite common in North Dakota. Starlings showed a marked increase and spread, with almost everyone emphasizing this feature. Meadowlarks wintered in some localities. A Cardinal was observed in the Fargo area on several occasions up to November 30 (Stevens). Purple Finches were noted at Des Lacs on November 21 (Low), and at Fargo on October 20 and November 6 (Stevens). Pine Siskins in early November at Fargo and Minot. A Chipping Sparrow on December 22 at Bottineau (Street).—C. J. HENRY, *Lower Souris National Wildlife Refuge, Upham, N. D.*

Texas Coastal Region.—This series of reports from the Texas coastal region would be impossible without the coöperation and diligent interest of Mrs. Conger Hagar, of Rockport; A. K. McKay, of Cove; Dr. Travis C. Meitzen, of Galveston; Mmes. Edna Miner, A. P. Todd, and J. R. Whitaker, and



Messrs. Fred E. Brown, J. M. Heiser, and F. A. Pattie, of Houston; and various others who will be mentioned from time to time.

I. Temperatures were about normal for the season. The freezing point was reached in the Houston area November 13 and 14, and again January 19. Generally, however, maximum daily temperatures hovered at about 60° to 70° or higher, and minimums at 50° to 60°. But the season was extraordinarily rainy. The rains that usually begin in late December and last for about six weeks, began this season in late October and continued to the end of the period. Days altogether free of fog or drizzle averaged hardly two a week. This condition was confined to the upper part of the Texas coast, and did not extend far to the west and south.

II. The general picture of bird life was as unusual as the weather. Perhaps there has never been such a scarcity of woodland birds (both individuals and species) in the Houston area. Mr. McKay estimated only 5% of the normal number of Myrtle and Pine Warblers, and 10% of Orange-crowned Warblers, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and House Wrens. Ground-feeding species like Bob-whites, Mourning Doves, Pipits, Cowbirds, Killdeer, and even Starlings were less numerous than usual. Many species, however, began to increase in numbers during January.

Most shore birds, as well as Coots, seemed scarce. But perhaps they were merely scattered over the rain-soaked countryside.

The scarcity of birds did not extend all the way down the coast. Mrs. Hagar, of Rockport, and James O. Stevenson, of the Aransas Wildlife Refuge (about 150 miles southwest of Houston), report that, except for Pipits and Phoebe's, their birds were as numerous as usual. Since their season was relatively dry, one is inclined to blame Houston's wet weather for the local scarcity. But the unprecedented cold weather of January, 1940, may be responsible.

Most of the Ducks (especially Pintails) and Lesser Snow, Blue, Canada, and White-

fronted Geese were exceedingly numerous. But Scaup and Canvas-back were relatively scarce. Marbled Godwits at Rockport increased from 2 or 3 a few years ago to several hundred. Wintering Hawks exceeded their usual numbers.

The thousands of Sandhill Cranes that wintered at Clodine (20 miles west of Houston) last year were reduced to hundreds this year, and the species was less common all down the coast. Last winter many of the birds died of a limberneck disease, which perhaps accounts for their comparative scarcity this winter.

III. Interesting arrival and departure dates:

As usual, arrival dates for the *Anatidae* fell into four well-defined groups this year: (1) August 20–September 10—Blue-winged Teal, Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Baldpate, Shoveller; (2) October 10–20—White-fronted, Canada, Blue, and Lesser Snow Geese; (3) November 1–5—Mallard, Black Duck, Gadwall; (4) November 15–30—Ring-necked Duck, Redhead, American Golden-eye, Bufflehead, Red-breasted Merganser, Scaup, Canvas-back.

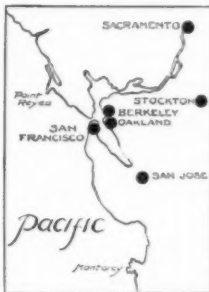
Most of the passerine winter residents arrived from a week to a month late, but departure of most summer residents and transients was about normal.

IV. Items of special interest:

Lapland Longspur, 8, at Cove, December 26, and 3, December 31 (McKay). The first White-winged Scoter recorded from the coast was shot on Aransas Bay and identified by Mrs. Hagar, December 30. James O. Stevenson now has the specimen.

Birds ordinarily farther south or west at this season: Vermilion Flycatcher, Houston, November 7, 8, 24, and December 13 (Pattie); female Bullock's Oriole, Cove, December 24 and 27 (McKay); Ferruginous Rough-leg, Clodine, January 4 (Miner, Whitaker); Man-o-war-bird, 20, Rockport, December 17 (Hagar); Franklin's Gull, near San Jacinto Battlefield, December 22 (Heiser, Williams); and more than 100 Hudsonian Curlews 75 miles southwest of Houston, near Bay City, January 19 (Heiser, Williams).—GEORGE G. WILLIAMS, *The Rice Institute, Houston, Texas.*

San Francisco Region.—Late start of fall rains, with November and December especially dry, delayed the winter growth of



vegetation. Killing frosts came on November 22 and 23 and a severe freeze occurred just before the middle of December. The rains which finally came on December 15 made it the wettest December on record in California. Rain fell on 33 of the follow-

ing 40 days at San Francisco.

Such prolonged and continuous rain made it difficult for observers to be in the field. Also, despite the high temperatures for this time of year, many kinds of birds seemed to face a serious shortage of food. Fruits such as the madrone berries which were eaten abundantly in late November disappeared along with the short crop of seeds and acorns, and these were not replaced at the usual time by new, green plants. An evident shortage of insect food in some localities appeared to contribute toward scarcity in many bird species. Possibly this accounts for the observed concentrations of birds in other areas.

At Berkeley, Mrs. Allen, in the period from October 17 to 19, noted marked increase in Audubon's Warbler, Red-shafted Flicker, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet. From November 5 to 7, she noted increases in the Flicker, Hermit Thrush, and Fox Sparrow. In Oakland and the adjacent hills, Seibert reports Cedar Waxwing and Robin less abundant than last year and Fox Sparrow and Varied Thrush as unusually abundant. Emlen, at Davis, after mid-December, found more Varied Thrushes than in any winter in the last seven. At the Hastings Reservation most of the species normally present in winter were greatly reduced in number or were absent entirely.

The peculiar sequences of weather with extremes of dryness and cold followed by extremes of rainfall and warmth seemed to bring numerous examples of extra-normal occurrences. No doubt greater activity of observers in the field would have revealed many records similar to the following. Band-tailed Pigeon, Davis, 1 on January 29 (Emlen); Allen's Hummingbird, Larkspur, 2

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on January 26 (Mrs. Courtright); California Woodpecker, Leona Heights, Oakland, 1 on December 29 (Seibert); Lewis's Woodpecker, near Searsville Lake, many on November 25 (Mrs. Allen); Canyon road from Skyline Boulevard to San Mateo, 8 on December 1 (Carl Smith); Brown Creeper, Davis, 1 on December 30 (Emlen); Mountain Bluebird, Suisun Marsh, 10 on January 27 (Parmenters); Golden-crowned Kinglet, Davis, 2 on December 20 (Emlen); Phainopepla, Davis, 1 on January 21 (Emlen); Black-throated Gray Warbler, Davis, 1 on January 29 (Emlen); Tricolored Red-wing, Carmel River mouth, 2 on October 20 and near Point Lobos, 5 on November 30 (Williams); Western Tanager, Kentfield, a male noted several times in mid-December (Court-right); Slate-colored Junco, Pacific Grove, 1 on December 10 (Miss Hoag), Carmel, 1 on December 12 (Williams); White-throated Sparrow, Carmel, 1 on November 4, and December 11, 12, and 13, at two places (Williams), Mills College, dead one found on December 22 (Seibert); Rusty Song Sparrow, Lake Merced, November 3 (Allen).

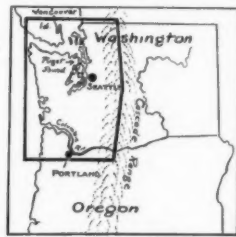
An example of a most valuable kind of bird-presence recording is the program being followed by David Nichols. He is keeping a daily record of individuals of all species counted at the Berkeley Aquatic Park. This series, when continued through more than one year, will provide a standard for comparison of bird populations along the shore of San Francisco Bay such as has never before been available. Many other spots in the region deserve this kind of continuous watching and careful reporting. Some first dates for long periods of presence revealed in this record are as follows: Western Grebe, November 23; Common Loon, December 21; Red-throated Loon, January 6; Canvas-back, November 7; American Golden-eye, November 10; White-winged Scoter, November 16; Surf Scoter, November 11; Red-breasted Merganser, December 3; Black-bellied Plover, October 29; Sanderling, October 23; Red Phalarope, October 26; Short-billed Gull, November 18.

Shore birds of all kinds that remain through the winter increased sharply about October 26 (Allen). Only a few of the reported records of water birds can be cited. Black-vented Shearwater, Carmel, 100 close

to beach on November 17 (Williams); White Pelican, Bolinas Bay, 4 on October 25, Sears Point Road, 18 on November 1, Tomales Bay, 4 on January 16 (Parmenters); Green Heron, Davis, one or more remained through the winter, noted December 20, January 14 and 29 (Emlen); American Bittern, Carmel River mouth, 1 on November 13 (Williams); Clapper Rail, Dumbarton Bridge, 15 on one day in October, greatest number, usually not more than 2 (Parmenters), more abundant this year than since decrease in fall of 1937 (Allen); Ancient Murrelet, Pacific Grove, 2 on January 13 (Mrs. Kelly); Rhinoceros Auklet, Pacific Grove, 1 on January 12 (Kelly).

These Geese and Ducks were reported: Canada Goose, Crystal Springs Lake, 18 on October 23, increase to around 500 on December 20, but only 20 on January 24 (Parmenters), San Pablo Reservoir, 125 on October 28 (Allen); Cinnamon Teal, Carmel, December 11 (Allen); Wood Duck, Phoenix Lake, November 8 (Kelly), Crystal Springs Lake, November 16 (Mrs. Stephens), Stow Lake, 2 on November 21 (Smith) and 3 on December 25 (Stephens), Del Monte, male on December 11 (Allen); Harlequin Duck, South Fork Merced River, near Wawona, female on October 20 (Kelly); American Scoter, Pacific Grove, 1 on November 12, third record for the vicinity (Williams).—
JEAN M. LINSDALE, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, Calif.*

Puget Sound Region.—After one of the most consistently warm and clear summers on record, this autumn broke early and



promised a severe winter. We had an above-normal October, both in temperature and in rainfall, but November was more severe than usual. A cold spell from November 8 to 22 brought freezing weather and snow to a low level on the mountains. A fairly strong wind on the 7th presaged this cold weather. December saw a return to the above-normal temperatures with still below-

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normal rainfall. One mild cold spell in the middle and one at the end of the month. Two windstorms of note in December, the one on the 21st a full gale over most of the region. January was wet and warm with three winds of note, but none extreme. February has also been mild, with a clear, cool spell lasting two weeks and resulting in a temporary drought. Snowfall has been the least in ten years, with only two or three flurries at sea level and periods of thawing at high levels. Thus, the winter of the region has been much warmer than normal, a little more rainfall, very much less snow, and has had six windstorms, or considerably more than usual.

The effect of this weather on the birds has been noticeable. The northern species have either not come south or have returned north again after the cold November. The birds that normally go south left early with the same cold spell. Resident species have not been concentrated at low levels by severe weather and so have not been observed in the usual numbers. The Christmas census, coming right after the worst windstorm, was the poorest census day on record.

Sea birds have been dispersed by the winds and mild weather. Western Grebes showed a great increase about fresh water and protected salt water. They nearly reached the 1935 maximum in numbers (Hagenstein). Black-footed Albatrosses were not seen on a sea trip thirty miles off the mouth of the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, September 9 (G. Eddy). White-crested Cormorants have greatly increased on Lake Washington, possibly due to the several windstorms. Anthony's Green Heron returned to the University of Washington swamp for the second fall.

Ducks and Geese have shown a remarkable increase over the past few years (Jewett). Two pairs of Gadwalls have been seen consistently on Lake Washington (M. Eddy). Baldpate have had the greatest increase ever

seen (Hagenstein). Six Blue-winged Teal on Lake Washington reported by Ward Beecher. Shovellers showed some increase. No Red-heads were reported. Canvas-backs showed a heartening increase on Whidby Island, where there were several wintering flocks of 25 or more. One female American Scoter off Alki Point on December 28 (G. Eddy). American Mergansers have shown a decided increase over the last five years in the opinion of W. Hagenstein. He considers this a peak year for American and a ten-year low for Red-breasted Mergansers.

Mr. Balmer at Grays Harbor reports quantities of dead Red Phalaropes, Pacific Fulmars, Pacific Kittiwakes, and other more common sea birds washed ashore during the gale of December 21. He also reports a wintering band of some 200 Black-bellied Plover being harrassed by the numerous Peale's Falcons. Mr. Theed Pearse reports 1 Glaucous Gull from Courtenay, Vancouver Island.

All of the Swallows suddenly left the entire region on September 10. Crows, both *hesperis* and *caurinus*, illustrate the effects of the weather this winter by being found in all regions and at all altitudes, and not concentrated in flocks at any points. Robins are definitely not concentrated about the cities as usual. The first full spring song of the Robin was reported on January 11 by Hagenstein. This is rather early.

Northwestern Shrikes were reported in December and on February 1 by Mr. Flock, and on February 13 by Mr. Beecher. Meadowlarks showed none of the usual concentrated flocks this year. Purple Finches maintained their abundance of last year about Seattle and again showed an increase on Vancouver Island (Hagenstein, Pearse). Fox Sparrows were rather scarce this year. Mr. Hagenstein reports a Song Sparrow building a nest on January 18 near Lake Washington.—GARRETT EDDY, 1117 Boylston Ave., N., Seattle, Wash.

A summary of all of the foregoing reports appears in this issue of AUDUBON MAGAZINE under the title of 'The Changing Seasons' by Ludlow Griscom.

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